

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2587) making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the Largent amendment to H.R. 2587. This measure would undermine efforts to place children in the foster care system in the District of Columbia in permanent homes.

There are currently over 3,000 children in the D.C. foster care system, more than 1,000 of whom are currently eligible for adoption. Many of these children have special needs and are difficult to place. No other development will have as great an impact on these children's lives as whether they will be able to be part of a family of their own. By placing restrictions on joint adoptions, the Largent amendment lessens the chance that these 3,000 children will ever be part of a "forever family."

The Largent amendment would also prevent child welfare workers from making decisions based on the best interests of individual children. The success of the child welfare system depends upon its ability to recognize that every waiting child has individual needs. The Largent amendment favors the judgment of Congress over that of child welfare professionals, who are experts at determining what constitutes a safe and loving home. Child advocacy organizations across the country, including the Children's Defense Fund and the Child Welfare League of America, also oppose this amendment and have recognized that it could endanger the future of over 3,000 children.

Mr. Chairman, no event has so profoundly transformed my own family as the adoption of my children, Kathryn and Scott. I will always be deeply grateful that my wife and I were able to welcome these two exceptional children into our home. The Largent amendment could prevent other families from experiencing this joy, and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL PARISH
HOSTS YOUTH GROUP MISSION
TRIP TO HONDURAS

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 1999

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, the Reverend Douglas Zimmerman of St. Thomas Episcopal Parish in Miami, Florida has always been known for his unselfish giving, his Christ-like character and his invaluable service to his parish and community. Among his many gifts are the precedents he sets and the ways in

which he leads children by example into following the teachings of Jesus Christ.

This Monday, August 2nd, Reverend Zimmerman will, once again, instruct students to give as Christ gave of himself, as he organizes a group of 12 dedicated students who have volunteered part of their summer vacation to lend a helping hand to underprivileged families in Central America.

During this mission trip, Reverend Zimmerman and his team of 12 students will travel to Honduras, a country which was ravaged by Hurricane Mitch, to establish places of refuge for families who were left desolate. They will bring light to a world of darkness by providing children and families with the basic necessities which we, the fortunate, often take for granted. During their 9-day trip, the mission team will have the unique opportunity of building a House of the Lord, a church where individuals, families and entire communities can come to know Jesus. The sanctuary to be built, where families will gather for worship, where the needy will receive, and where the hungry and tired will find comfort and rest, will restore faith, hope and joy to the people of Honduras.

In light of the many contributions Reverend Zimmerman and the St. Thomas Episcopal Parish Youth Mission Team will make this summer, I ask that my colleagues join me in prayer to ensure safety for this team and in commending them for their faithfulness in bringing the "good news" of Jesus Christ.

IN HONOR OF MS. BRIGID
O'KEEFFE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Ms. Brigid O'Keeffe, a student from Ohio's 10th district. Ms. O'Keeffe has recently been announced as one of the National Security Education Program's Undergraduate Scholarship and Graduate Fellows for the 1999–2000 academic year. The National Security Education Program, which was established in 1992, was created to increase U.S. citizens' understanding of different world cultures, to increase international cooperation and security and to strengthen U.S. economic competitiveness. The National Security Education Program fellows study those languages and areas of the world most critical to future U.S. national security.

Ms. O'Keeffe was selected from a rigorous national-merit based competition made up of a pool of hundreds of well qualified applicants. Aside from traveling to Russia, where she will be studying, Ms. O'Keeffe will participate in the National Security Education Program's Federal service requirement. All National Security Education Program award recipients have agreed to seek work in the Federal government in an organization with national security responsibilities. In the past, the program has placed award recipients in various positions throughout the Federal sector, including: Departments of Commerce, Defense, State, and Treasury; NASA, USAID, USIA, and the Intelligence Community.

Ms. O'Keeffe will no doubt be a fine addition to any one of these organizations. She should be congratulated on her accomplishments.

SALUTE TO THE MEDAL OF
HONOR RECIPIENTS

HON. STEVE E. BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 1999

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reflect on the recent Memorial Day recess.

Over that weekend, I had the distinct pleasure and honor to assemble with a very special group of veterans, nearly 100 recipients of the Medal of Honor. It was truly an inspiring gathering, and at the same time, proved a very humbling experience. These individuals epitomize the true meaning of selfless sacrifice and personal commitment.

While many have answered the call to duty, they have answered a higher calling. A calling that is spiritual in nature and bigger than one's self. For love of God, country, family and friends, these brave individuals knowingly placed themselves in harm's way, ready to sacrifice life and limb so that their comrades may live.

Their significant contributions have helped secure a more democratic and peaceful world over the last century. More importantly, their actions serve as a testament to all Americans about serving and caring for others. A recent letter to me from Major General Robert Moorehead, United States Army Retired, portrays a fitting description describing that powerful event.

General Moorehead stated:

Memorial Day weekend in Indianapolis was one of the most significant weekends in the history of our great capital city. As the last days of the 20th century continue to unfold, Memorial Day weekend in the capitol of Indiana was one to remember. Nearly 100 Medal of Honor recipients were guests for a series of stirring tributes. These included a solemn Memorial Service; the dedication of the only memorial to recipients to the Medal of Honor; grand marshals in the IPALCO 500 Festival Parade; an outdoor concert by the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra; and a parade lap around the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway oval prior to the start of the race.

As the 20th century draws to a close, many wonder if the nation has lost sight of the sacrifices which have been made to preserve freedom. After this Memorial Day weekend in Indianapolis, my heart remains swollen with pride in our land and my fellow citizens. The reception given these ordinary men who did extraordinary things can never be equaled.

I am especially proud of the untold hundreds of volunteers who gave of their time and talent to make these events possible. Memorial Day Weekend 1999 did much to convince me that our nation's freedom loving spirit is alive and well.

A TRIBUTE MR. WING FAT

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 1999

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise in tribute to Mr. Wing Fat of Sacramento, California. The Sacramento Chinese Community Service Center will honor him for all of his great contributions to the Asian and Pacific Islander communities in our area. I ask all of my